

THE LABOUR ORGANISER

No. 34

SEPTEMBER, 1923

Price 4d.

OUT OF THE RUT

IDEAS AND ACTIVITIES IN BRIEF

We reproduce on our inside pages the frontispiece of an election address by Mr. T. Summerbell, mentioned in our last issue. We think our readers will agree with the opinion we expressed upon the same last month.

The Westhoughton Division are to be congratulated on the successful achievement chronicled this month, by which 2,300 new paying members have been enrolled since last September. This record is one which many divisional parties will envy. It has been attained merely by steady, plodding work, and persistency all round. There was, however, a part-time woman canvasser employed at one time, and this proved an excellent investment not merely from the financial standpoint, but from the added strength and interest of the fresh membership secured. A tasteful membership certificate has been in use, the front of which bears the photograph of Mr. R. J. Davies, M.P., the sitting member, while on the back is a portrait of the energetic agent, Mr. W. A. Spofforth with other suitable matter. These cards are to be found on the mantelshelves in hundreds of workers' homes throughout the constituency, and are a sure indication of the popularity of Labour in the division and its prospects of continued success.

Readers are reminded of the advice tendered some time ago when sending for samples mentioned in this column. It is unfair to send for samples expecting others to be penalised in the postage on same. The least that should be done is to send a large addressed envelope, sufficiently stamped, but it is infinitely better to enclose a few postage stamps as a contribution to the funds of the Party from whom a favour and information is sought. This is some recognition of the enterprise and efficiency which has secured mention in the "Labour Organiser" and of the service which is expected.

One of the methods of getting a meeting which generally proves successful is that of door-to-door canvassing down neighbouring streets conveying the word and invitation to a meeting to be held close by. Particularly has this method proved successful with women's meetings where women themselves have canvassed the invitations. Mr. W. H. Hunt, Labour Agent at Gravesend, introduces a handbill to convey the same invitation, and this we reproduce for the benefit of others.

Please Come out for a few minutes.

**A VERY SHORT
MEETING FOR WOMEN**
will be held near your house
IN FIVE MINUTES TIME

IN SUPPORT OF THE
Women's Section of the Labour Party.
COME AND HEAR LABOUR'S POLICY

The 'Labour Woman.' The 'Daily Herald.'
Read them.

JOIN THE LABOUR PARTY!

"What Two Shillings Will Do" is the title of an attractive little membership form in leaflet shape which has been issued by the Keighley Labour Party, Organiser, Mr. W. Bland, J.P., of 140 Devonshire Street, Keighley. The little form is daintily got up, and we hope it will succeed in its object, i.e., that of assisting in the campaign to greatly increase the individual membership.

The East Bristol Labour Party has been conducting a summer canvass for the purpose of registration and permanent records under the guidance of the agent, Mr. H. E. Rogers—one of the youngest and most successful organisers in the area. Bristol East did exceptionally well at the General Election, and its future as a Labour constituency should be insured if work of this character is undertaken and carried through.

Labour agents and secretaries frequently go to a good deal of trouble to place people on the register who are apt to take all this service as a matter of course. Often the last thought is that of gratitude to the party who has placed the individual on the register, while some people, if they think of the matter at all, consider they are entitled to such service, or perhaps that it is paid for from public funds. Mr. P. F. Pollard, late candidate at Ludlow and Labour Agent at Colchester, has introduced an excellent method of sending a notification to all persons who have been placed on the register by him giving them particulars of the entry. This is a tactful way of bringing the party's service to the notice of the voter, and it also tends to familiarise him with the significance of the register and his own entry thereon. The letter sent is as follows:—

COLCHESTER DIVISION LABOUR PARTY.

Labour Party Club,
Eld Lane,
Colchester.

Dear Sir or Madam,

*Autumn Register of Electors for the
Colchester Division.*

I am pleased to be able to inform you that your name is included in the List of Newly-Qualified Electors.

I show below particulars taken from the List for your information.

Should you desire any information, I am at your service.

Believe me,

Yours faithfully,

P. F. POLLARD, *Secretary.*

PARTICULARS.

No.	Parly.	Local Name.	Residence	Govt.
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Attention is drawn to the exceptional offer of the Labour Party who are offering special parcels of canvass slips and covers at the unheard-of price of 2/- per thousand in lots of five thousand, or even less if ten thousand are taken. We understand this offer is a purely temporary one, and it should be made avail of by all interested in the municipal elections, while some parties would be well advised to secure a stock immediately for Parliamentary election purposes.

A LOCAL LABOUR WEEK.

A "Labour Week" was recently inaugurated by the Farnham Divisional Labour Party, and the results proved most encouraging. Opportunity was taken of a visit by Mr. Jack Mills, one of the Party propagandists, and of a visit from Mr. J. Ramsay MacDonald, M.P., to make the whole week sacred to the Labour cause and to inaugurate a big forward movement. The aid of affiliated societies and of local parties in the division was enlisted and the scheme took the shape of organising simultaneous meetings in all parts of the division, some of which would be visited by central speakers, the remainder to be addressed by local speakers, and by exchanges of speakers from other localities.

The arrangements, which were principally in the hands of Mr. R. C. Williams, the divisional secretary, involved, of course, a considerable amount of work, but all this was apparently discharged with admirable efficiency, and a record series of meetings resulted. An interesting feature of this enterprise was the extent to which the local parties of the division were made to sense their own responsibilities. They all got to work in an unprecedented manner, the results being that benefit was practically uniform throughout the division. The Farnham Division is not one of the brightest spots for Labour activity, for it is a stockbrokers' paradise, yet the enterprise more than justified itself and untold good resulted from the re-invigoration of the movement and enlistment of new members; and last, though not least, by the substantial profit which accrued from the whole effort.

"Always busy and always business-like" is a good motto. The Labour Party has at least as much right to smart and efficient service from its paid and voluntary workers as have employers in the industrial world. We have certainly no more moral right to be late for a Party meeting in the evening than we have to be behind time for the boss in the morning. There ought to be no sloppy drifting in Labour work. If we have not fitness for organising it is questionable whether we are fit to govern.—From "Labour Party Organisation in London," by Herbert Morrison.

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

Interest in the Municipal Elections will be, of course, this year confined to the Provinces, for the Metropolitan Borough Councils, which added interest to the November contests last year, do not retire as Provincial Councils do to the extent of one-third annually. In London there is a General Election every three years, and the opportunities of October of last year will not occur again until 1925.

The following is a list of articles on municipal election matters which have already appeared in the "Labour Organiser," and should now be turned to with interest:—

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS:

Licensed Houses and Elections.

November, 1920, pages 3 and 4.

Tips for. September, 1921, page 8.

Law Summary of.

October, 1921, page 8.

Acts Governing.

September, 1922, page 6.

Agents at. September, 1922, page 4.

Agents at. October, 1922, page 16.

Candidates for.

September, 1922, page 4.

Candidate's return and declaration.

October, 1922, page 17.

Committee Rooms for.

September, 1922, page 6.

Committee Rooms for.

October, 1922, page 16.

Conveyances at.

October, 1922, page 16.

Corrupt Practices at.

October, 1922, page 16.

Displaying Posters at

October, 1922, page 16.

Expenses, Limit of.

September, 1922, page 6.

Expenses, Return of.

September, 1922, page 6.

Expenses, Return of.

October, 1922, page 17.

False Report of Withdrawal from.

October, 1922, page 16.

Fine for Resignation of Candidate.

September, 1922, page 6.

Insufficient Nominations for.

September, 1922, page 4.

Law of. September, 1922, page 4.

Law of. October, 1922, page 16.

Licensed Premises at, Use of.

October, 1922, page 16.

Marks of Distinction at.

October, 1922, page 16.

Nominations for.

September, 1922, page 4.

Notice for.

September, 1922, page 4.

Objections to Nominations for.

September, 1922, page 4.

Person Election for more than one Ward. September, 1922, page 6.

Procedure for Preparation for.

October, 1922, page 2.

Prohibited Vote at.

October, 1922, page 16.

Reminders for.

October, 1922, page 16.

Return of Expenses.

October, 1922, page 17.

Who Vote at.

September, 1922, page 4.

Withdrawal of Candidate, Procur-
ing and Reporting.

October, 1922, page 16.

The New Register.

August 1923, page 2.

Preparation for.

August, 1923, page 5.

NEXT MONTH

MUNICIPAL ELECTION LITERATURE.

By FRANK H. EDWARDS.

No. 1

OF THE

Labour Organiser

In response to many requests No. 1 of the Labour Organiser has now been reprinted and is obtainable at the usual price, viz., Single Copy, 4d., post free 4½d.

No. 1 was issued as a type-written, duplicated journal, and is now issued in ordinary form for the convenience of those desiring to keep or bind their copies. A peculiar interest attaches to this copy.

**Send at once. A limited
number only printed.**

Usual terms for quantities.

THE SECRETARY'S PAGE.

HELP AND HINTS IN SEASON.

How many secretaries make a point of preparing a budget estimating the income and expenditure for an on-coming year? There is great advantage in this plan, and two or three budgets have recently reached us which have been of an encouraging character. It is infinitely better to forecast the activities and expenses of a coming period than to wait until debt is incurred, or activities curtailed because of want of money. Where no such plan has been adopted it is generally possible to look backward on a year's work and to feel surprised at the small amount of real extension work practised. Where, however, a budget is made, one begins to realise the number of things that the party might do which it isn't doing. There is a better realisation of the actual needs of the Party and of the necessity for money-getting. It is here that the Chancellor of the Exchequer gets his opportunity.

The day is fortunately passing when any local party could look to wealthy Trades Unions to relieve it of all its financial difficulties and obligations. Practically every local Labour Party, even where a Union finances the candidate, now finds it necessary to raise a substantial sum annually. All these parties should budget, and when the budget is presented it should generally not be a question of cutting down to make ends meet, but of finding new ways and means by which estimated expenditure can be met. Perhaps some day some Hercules will arrive who will accomplish the task of reforming the finances and resources of the Labour movement, giving every local Labour Party its just dues. But by that time the millennium will have arrived and we shan't want the money. So meantime every party, or most of them, must set themselves the task of raising the wind.

Of the budgets that have reached us most all of them show a substantial estimate of income from social efforts. For the life of us we cannot see the force in the objection of some purists that this is not right, and that our income should be of a purely political character. Heaven forbid the day

when the mass of people dourly pay for their politics in weekly doles and our movement becomes divorced from everything gay and joyous. Social effort in moderation is a cleansing as well as a life-giving function for a Labour Party to perform. There are few places where it is carried to excess.

It is not unusual for a local Labour Party to-day to require to budget almost or quite into four figures. Some of the balance sheets we have recently published indicate that in few cases are these figures attained on the catholicity of affiliation fees and members' subscriptions. One or two recent budgets provided for a substantial income to be derived from "catering." This does not refer to the catering in the movement at teas and socials or clubs, but in these cases it is catering in a public way for pleasure parties and excursionists visiting holiday centres.

In a recent case under our notice the Labour Party catered for some seven hundred people and did it well and at a profit. Here is a new use for our Labour halls in these places, and it is a suggestion to organisers of Trades Union banquets and outings that they should make enquiries of the Labour movement in the places they propose to visit. We recently had a quite unbelievable meat tea for 1/- at one of these places where we were feeling sorry for the providers till we found out what a profit had been made.

The dearth of Parliamentary candidates is causing some inconvenience to a number of local Labour Parties just now. In several cases invitations to nominate candidates have been sent out to affiliated bodies, and selection meetings have been provisionally fixed, the nett result, however, being an anticlimax due to the fact that no nominations have come in. The truth is that numbers of Trades Union officials are obsessed with the idea that no General Election is likely for three or four years, and that therefore no hurry need be shown in placing candidates. Legitimate as this view may be, and unsound as we believe it, it is nevertheless quite defensible by comparison with the

course advocated by some other Trades Union officials who deliberately withhold candidates in the hope of securing a much cheaper return. In the latter case there is a mistaken view as to the relationship of a candidature and its finances to the whole movement. After all, the early promotion of a candidature is desired because of the opportunities of propaganda and consolidation of forces which the work of a selected candidate entails in his constituency. Trades Union political funds are surely not accumulated or paid by the members for the sole purpose of cramming a few officials into Parliament at the last minute. They are contributed for the purpose of political education and all-the-year-round organisation, and to withhold candidatures hampers this work, and in some cases actually undoes what has been done and makes more expensive future work. There is a good deal of false economy being practised, and more candidates ought to be forthcoming.

However, the present impasse with regard to candidates is impelling a movement for more locally-financed candidates, and constituencies which had never really previously examined their own resources and possibilities in this direction are now doing so with a view to nominating other individuals than Trades Union officers as their candidates. It is an ill wind that blows no one any good, and the dilatoriness of the Unions in placing candidates is leading to a re-examination of the Party's resources in man-power among the local parties of the kingdom. There is no doubt that we have a great reserve of latent ability which Trades Union resources, and opportunities for "national" men have somewhat obscured. Some of the best men in the present Parliamentary Labour Party graduated in their own local movement and local Council, and we have good enough men in these places to fight the whole six hundred seats in Parliament. It is therefore all to the good that there should be this introduction of the resources.

ERRATUM

We regret that in printing the rules of the Colchester Young Labour League last month an unnoticed printers' error crept in, and the subscription which was stated to be 10/- per year should have read 1/- per annum.

*A Handbook every
Labour Organiser
will find useful.*



TRADE UNIONISM PAST & FUTURE

By MARK STARR

(Author of "A Worker Looks at History")

Foreword by GEO. HICKS (A.U.B.T.A.)

40 pages 6d.

(Post Paid 7d.) with pictorial cover

A "potted" history of the British working-class movement, with a summary of present-day problems and probable developments.



Send 1/- (mention "Labour Organiser") and we will forward the above and also a copy of the current issue of

THE PLEBS

*Organ of the Labour
College Movement*

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The Challenge, April, 1923

Monthly, 48 pages 6d.

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162a Buckingham Palace Road,
London, S.W. 1

SOME HINTS ON BAZAARS AND MONEY RAISING.

HOW TO COMBINE A PEOPLE'S FAIR WITH A SALE OF WORK.

By H. ATKINSON.
(THIRD ARTICLE.)

It will generally be found that a sale begins to flag after a few hours of brisk business. Some of the stalls become emptied and unless some additional attractions are introduced business almost ceases. A new attraction in the evening will bring along new patrons whose attendance will also benefit the stalls yet open. An ordinary entertainment does not meet the case, as it is disastrous to have a song and a salesman in competition.

A People's Fair, however, can be run in conjunction with the remnants of the sale, to the advantage of both. At six o'clock the depleted stalls may be reduced by combining two or three into one. The work stall, reduced in size, will, with one or two others, remain open for business. In place of the stalls closed down will be erected hoop-la stall, dart gallery, and other games in close imitation to those found on fair grounds.

The preparation for these games is by no means difficult. Four games will usually occupy all the available space, and from six to twelve men can undertake the preparations, which should be completed ready for erection before the day of the sale. The assistance of a friendly joiner is a boon and will keep costs at a minimum, but there is nothing in the preparations which is beyond the skill of the average "handy man."

A suitable hoop-la stall, $3\frac{1}{2}$ ft. by 8 ft., is made by obtaining two pieces of three-ply board each $3\frac{1}{2}$ ft. by 4 ft. and fixing them on a frame made of light spars. If made in two sections to bolt firmly together it is handier for storage. Erect on a pair of trestles about 2 ft. high, and raise slightly at the rear. Cover with coloured papers for decoration. A six-inch hoop is recommended. R. Thomas & Co., Fair Stall Warehousemen, Harewood Street, Vicar Lane, Leeds, will supply the necessary two dozen hoops for about two shillings, and they will also supply prizes to furnish the stall. No selection of goods is allowed, but a £2 or £3 parcel will provide a wonderful assortment of prizes. Send cash with order and state

size of hoop to be used. Each prize must be erected on a block $\frac{3}{4}$ in. by $4\frac{1}{2}$ ins. square, which will just allow the hoop to pass clearly over it; these may be made from waste pieces of board, obtainable from a joiner for a few coppers. Fifty or sixty of these are required. Do not grudge what may appear valuable prizes, as at three hoops for 2d. or five for 3d. a huge profit will result.

For a dart gallery the equipment required is a board of softish wood, $3\frac{1}{2}$ ft. by 4 ft., or larger. Cover with strips of coloured papers, and fix several strips of narrow elastic cross-wise to hold the prizes. Small packets of cigarettes are the most attractive prize, but these are assisted by a much larger quantity of small decorative badges, obtainable from Thomas & Co. The board is erected against the wall, picture fashion, with a table underneath for the display of additional prizes. A screen down each side to give a finish to the gallery is advisable. Two dozen darts are made from rounded pegs about $\frac{3}{4}$ in. by 8 ins., with a thin sharp nail in one end and a balance "tail" of feather or cardboard at the other.

A bag and board game is made from a piece of stout board, 2 ft. by $3\frac{1}{2}$ ft., or larger. Five diamond-shape pieces are removed, one from near each corner and one in the centre. Bags loosely filled with sand or beans and just small enough to struggle through the holes are thrown from a distance of seven or eight yards, with the board erected in a leaning position against the wall. This game is popular, and at five bags for 2d., with a small prize for four and five "through," it is a money-maker.

Skittles is another game, and there are many others which can be improvised to complete a programme. Generally four or five are sufficient if a few guessing competitions, raffles, and a fortune-teller are to be included. Each game, with its equipment, should be ready to move into its place as soon as the stall closes down.

Those responsible for conducting the Fair must enter into the spirit of their new business by introducing all the arts and wiles of the fair ground. Chaff, good humour, an incitement to rivalry, all make for success and profit, and not the least profit accrues to the politician who puts aside his dignity to enter into the spirit of the Fair.

£500

to be awarded
in Prizes.

First Prize

£250

Tickets

1/-

each

OBTAINABLE FROM
YOUR LOCAL
LABOUR
PARTY

The Great Labour Ballot

In aid of the Local Labour Parties
in Great Britain. Organised by
the Whitechapel and St. George's
Labour Party.

“Yes!
we have
no
bananas”

But if we had,
they would not
pay

**PRINTERS’
BILLS.**

□

What YOU want
is MONEY.

□

Let the
**GREAT
LABOUR
BALLOT**

pay for your
coming

**Local
Elections**

“Unto him that Hath ...”

THE old saying, so often used by our propagandists, can be applied to the organisation of the local Labour Parties in this country. If the Labour member or prospective candidate is of a big Trade Union organisation, the local Party is (usually) blessed with the good things that are going.

* * * *

LOCAL Parties that are not quite in such a fortunate position have a hard time keeping the machinery intact for local and Parliamentary elections. There is that essential which is missing that makes the difference between a smooth-running motor and a 15-year-old Ford—Spindulicks.

* * * *

WHITECHAPEL and St. George's Divisional Labour Party is running a co-operative scheme in the shape of the GREAT LABOUR BALLOT. This idea will just suit the needs of those local Parties that are always “broke” or have no assured income. The basis of the BALLOT is essentially a co-operative one, i.e., the local Parties share with the organisers equally in the takings; there are no expenses entailed by the sellers. Printed books, tickets and literature are supplied free of charge, and the prizes, amounting to over £500, are guaranteed. All that the local people are required to do is sell the tickets.

* * * *

THE success of the BALLOT has been phenomenal, and has greatly exceeded the anticipations of the organisers. Those local Labour Party secretaries that are wise will order their books at once—next month may be too late.

For Books of Tickets and full particulars apply to S. J. DONOGHUE,
Organising Secretary. Central Office, 138, Cannon Street Road, London, E.1

THE BALLOT IS QUITE LEGAL.

LOCAL NEWSPAPER MEMS.

The "Tees and Cleveland Pioneer" is one of the best and most vigorous monthlies we have seen. It has now reached its twelfth number, and much of its success is undoubtedly due to Mr. A. J. Thatcher, the agent of the Stockton and Thornaby Labour Party, whose previous experience of local newspapers in other places has undoubtedly served him here in good stead.

We gather that about six thousand copies per month are now being sold. This is an exceptionally good achievement for a new paper. The "Pioneer" will, of course, be an asset during the municipal elections, when it is hoped to issue some eighteen or twenty thousand copies. There is a good income from advertisements, and it is expected that the paper will be paying its way when it achieves its first year's anniversary this month.

We note that the printers are the National Labour Press, of Leicester.

The Gloucester Labour Party are to be congratulated on the "Labour Observer," a monthly paper whose advent we noticed in our June issue. The paper is, in the first place, admirably edited, and its contents possess a vigour and intelligence that stamp it as quite one of the brightest journals of a local character that Labour possesses. The printing is done by a small firm of Socialist printers who are working on a Co-operative or Guild basis, and the work is creditable to them. We wish that some of the stupid people who have been spreading notions of Gloucester's plight owing to the smallpox could read the "Labour Observer," or, better still, go to Gloucester and see for themselves what silly stories the daily press have spread. Gloucester's pulse beats quite normally despite the stunt press, and no passer-by would credit that this is the city which the wooden pencils of wooden-headed journalists have made notorious. The Gloucester Labour Party, at any rate, is quite normal and hasn't lost its head. The "Observer" is an evidence of that and a welcome one.

The "Colchester Times" is just a four-page quarto fly, of which two pages are taken up with advertisements. We always feel encouraged when we see a party taking its courage in both hands in this way and making its own modest

attempt at the publication of its own paper. This journal takes the place of a former monthly circular, which was duplicated, but it has been found that the printed sheet is more imposing and easily read, and, what is more, though it is distributed free, the advertisements just pay the cost. There are literally hundreds of local Labour Parties who could follow on the same lines with advantage to themselves. It requires but the combined effort of very few people to determine and carry on a small paper like this, and secure the advertisements for same. The local Labour Party possessing such an advocate could always ensure that the truth reaches the people, and it can get its own announcements before them more readily and more cheaply than in any other way.

The September number of the "Rochdale Labour News," to hand as we are going to press, seems to take the palm for advertisements. Nearly fifty displayed advertisements appear in this issue. They are clear evidence that the bright and varied characteristics of this paper will not soon be lost to the movement!

As if to encourage our friends of the "Gravesend Messenger," and to justify our hopes expressed in the June issue concerning the Westthoughton publication, there comes to hand after we had written the above paragraph the first issue of the Westthoughton monthly in printed form. The "Labour Member" may be a diminutive publication (it is only an octavo fly sheet), but in all its essentials it is a news-sheet, and a plucky and encouraging one at that. It chronicles a good deal of Labour news and activities and it is interspersed with several useful points. It would be better for some local parties to issue quite modest sheets of this character rather than to defer action until they can publish more pretentious journals with all the possibilities of loss. The little paper has an interest of its own and can wield an influence altogether out of proportion to its size.

"An old age pension is not adequate to provide anything for rent." This statement was made by the Town Clerk of Rochdale at the Revision Court when disallowing the claim of an old age pensioner for a vote on account of unfurnished rooms.

RUSSIAN INFORMATION & REVIEW

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Regular and authentic information about Soviet Russia, compiled from the Russian Press and official documents

Statistics of output of the main industries of Russia; records of industrial, commercial and financial progress; text of important decrees; records of Labour legislation and organisation; reports of Trade Union conferences; statistics of Russo-British and General Russian foreign trade; text of important Notes, etc.

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BOUND VOLUMES, WITH FULL INDEX, NOW AVAILABLE :—

Volume I. October, 1921—September, 1922. 10s. 6d. post free.

Volume II. October, 1922—June, 1923 (containing the full text of the new Labour Code and the decree on Law Courts), 15s. post free

Order from **RUSSIAN INFORMATION & REVIEW**
68 LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS LONDON, W.C.2

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor of the *Labour Organiser*.
August 23rd, 1923.

Dear Sir,—In order that any Labour Party may establish a Labour Party Club in the closest association with its political activities and enjoy the privileges of very substantial reductions of initial expenses, it is proposed to form an Association of Labour Party Clubs on similar lines to the Association of Conservative Clubs and the Working Men's Club and Institute Union. Both of these bodies are able to secure a reduction in registration fee of a limited liability club of £7 (£3 instead of £10), with a considerable further saving as regards the printing of rules and other items amounting to a substantial total.

Such an association would link up existing clubs and form a medium for discussing club affairs generally from a Labour Party point of view. It would also secure that the management and control of any constituent club should not be allowed to pass out of the hands of the local Labour Party, or that the club should become merely an unlicensed public-house instead of fulfilling its function of service for the party.

In East Islington, where a club is being formed which is not to be affiliated to the existing Club Union, considerable difficulties are being experienced owing to the heavy compulsory costs incidental to the formation of an independent club completely under Labour control, owing to the non-existence of such an association.

Will friends interested in this subject please write to me at the address below, and if already associated with a Labour Club accompany the letter with a copy of rules, members' application form, contribution card, or any other document relative to the matter and likely to be of service. By so doing they will greatly oblige.—Yours truly,

R. MONTFORD.

63, Highbury Hill, N.5.

*What you save in Cash
you lose in Efficiency
unless all the officers of
your Party get the*

Labour Organiser



HE WHO WOULD BE FREE
HIMSELF MUST STRIKE THE BLOW.





VOTE LABOUR

ELECTION ADDRESS FRONTISPIECE

With cut-out corner to take photo of the candidate (as shown), or election slogan. Actual size. Blocks 15s., or address printed with it without extra charge.

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Envelopes, Polling Sheets and Books, Canvass Cards, etc.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

Correspondents are required to give their full name and address, not, however, necessarily for publication. Replies from general correspondents cannot be given through the post. It is imperative that where a reply depends on a statement of fact (such, for instance, as qualification of an elector to be on the register), the fullest information should be given.

Question.—A friend of our Party has sometimes lent us a motor car at our local elections, but does not, however, propose this year to carry a licence for same after September. Can you tell me if it would be possible for a member of our Party to take out a licence for the car so that the same can be used on November 1st?

Answer.—We are afraid that the transference of a car licence from one person to another is not so easy a matter as our friend envisages. In fact, the Motor Act Regulations on this point seem designed rather to inconvenience than to assist. However, this fact need not cause any inconvenience on this occasion, and our friends need not go to the trouble either of seeking to transfer the licence to themselves or to persuade the generous friend of their Party to specially take out a licence so that he may continue to render the assistance he has previously given.

The Corrupt Practices Act contains a provision as follows:—

“No person shall be liable to pay any duty or to take out a licence for any carriage by reason only of such carriage being used without payment or promise of payment for the conveyance of electors to or from the poll at an election.”

It will thus be seen that the car may be used on November 1st, notwithstanding the fact that the licence in respect of same expires on 30th September. On no account, however, should an unlicensed car be used for the mere conveyance of *workers*. It must be used for the purpose specified in the Act, i.e., for conveyance of *voters* to the poll. It cannot even be used, if unlicensed, for touring the candidate round the constituency.

Question.—We are about to select a candidate for this division. Can you

please give us your ruling on the following point? At the selection conference certain Unions claim to be represented, though they are not affiliated locally or nationally, and others claim to be represented on the ground that they are affiliated nationally, though not affiliated to our local Divisional Party. Will you please say whether these Unions have the right to send delegates?

Answer.—This question has already been dealt with in one form or another on two or three previous occasions. Evidently old rules and traditions die hard even in the Labour Party. In the first place, the term “Selection Conference” itself is nowhere to be found in the Labour Party rules, and it is itself a survival of pre-1918 procedure. Prior to the coming into force of the Labour Party new constitution, “Selection Conferences” for the selection of Parliamentary candidates were provided for in a resolution of the Labour Party Conference. A conflict of opinion had arisen as to what constituted a regularly convened Labour Party Conference in a constituency, for there were then no uniform rules laid down, and the Hull Conference in 1908 adopted the following definition for future guidance:—

“All branches of affiliated organisations within a constituency or divided borough covered by a proposal to run a Labour candidate must be invited to send delegates to the Conference, and the local organisation responsible for calling the Conference may, if it thinks fit, invite representatives from branches of organisations not affiliated but eligible for affiliation.”

In 1918 the new constitution, as intimated, automatically repealed the above ruling, and the selection of a Parliamentary candidate is now made at a “specially summoned meeting of the General Committee,” the procedure in this respect being the same for all kinds of constituencies, whether borough, county or divided boroughs. The constitution of the General Committee itself is provided for in other rules. It will be seen therefore that no selection conference in the old sense can take the place of the specially summoned meeting of the General Committee. Procedure by a selection conference of the old order is altogether irregular and open to objection. The

rights of affiliated organisations are obviously the only ones to be considered, and non-affiliated organisations are properly shut out.

It should be noted that national affiliation nowhere in the Party rules carries with it any right in respect to local organisations. A branch of a Union affiliated nationally has no local privilege or advantage over a Union which is not affiliated at all nationally. Affiliation to be complete in the Party must be both national and local. All this is quite clear from an intelligent reading of the model rules adopted by conference and sold by the Labour Party at one penny each. It should be added that now that local parties are established in every area it is manifestly unfair that the votes and free selection of those who have carried the burden should be upset by the introduction at a special meeting of other delegates who have not done one iota in bringing together the meeting or furthering the common cause.

LAW AND PRACTICE.

[Under this heading are found brief and chatty explanations of points of commoner interest concerning the Law and Practice of Elections. Readers are invited to suggest points for notice herein, but are reminded that suggestions made may not necessarily be dealt with in the next issue.—Ed.]

REFRESHMENTS TO WORKERS.

An ever-recurring question with those who take charge of elections, local or parliamentary, is whether it is legitimate to provide refreshments for workers in the committee rooms, and others. The seeker after enlightenment finds very little comment upon this question in the text-books, and some of them actually ignore the point altogether; nevertheless this question crops up again and again in practice, and a very clear understanding of the position is desirable.

In some places it has been the practice to provide refreshments for committee room workers almost from time immemorial. Each party has done it, and our own Party has imitated the ways of their forefathers, so that the matter has never been in question in these places so far as the general body

of electioneers was concerned. This position, however, does not at all prove the legality of payment for refreshments, or the giving or receipt of them. Nor, because all parties may be committing the illegality, is any one party or individual free from the penalty thereof. Because all parties agree to do an illegal thing it does not make the matter legal, and the only security it imparts is the moral one (or immoral one) that neither of one's opponents are likely to take action because of being equally guilty. This is unsatisfactory, and those who conduct Labour elections should seek to conduct them within the limits of the law, whatever local practice has been. It will be found that limitations on expenditure invariably tend to the advantage of the poorer candidate, apart altogether from one's views on the purity of elections, on which matter it is only necessary to say that every Labour man should hold it as a canon of his faith that elections must be pure.

The question we are dealing with involves the consideration of several offences which may, or may not, be committed by the act of supplying refreshments. One desires, in the first place, to know whether such gifts may be regarded as "treating"—a most heinous election offence and a "Corrupt Practice." If the gift of refreshments is "treating," then both the giver and the recipient might be held to be guilty. Then the question arises whether the practice is "an employment" within the meaning of the Act; or, again, whether the item of expenditure is an "illegal payment."

Taking the question of treating first, it does not appear from past decisions that in ordinary cases of supplying refreshments to workers the offence of treating is committed. There may, of course, be circumstances under which the gift of refreshments would be corrupt, and a corrupt motive exist, making that a "corrupt practice." Thus the provision of elaborate meals for the purpose of attracting a class of worker who only came for food or drink would obviously be corrupt. Other circumstances may be easily imagined, but they are far-fetched in actual practice, and it would be extremely difficult to bring home a charge of treating in any ordinary case.

A more important point to be considered, however, is whether the gift of refreshments constitutes "an employ-

ment." Now there are two customary circumstances under which refreshments are supplied to workers. A candidate or an agent of the candidate may invite another worker or other workers out to lunch, or to tea, or may even send out for same and the meal be supplied in the committee rooms. This may be an exercise of personal hospitality which in no sense comes under the ban of the Corrupt Practices Acts, and an election judge has specifically said, "Hospitality always has been and I hope always will be a virtue with the people in this country—the mere exercise of hospitality is not an offence. Indeed, it may be and often is the right thing to be done." One must not stretch this meaning too far, but for the benefit of officious and fussy persons it cannot be too often stated that hospitality is not a crime. In the case of the candidate it may, of course, be desirable that he should return any such expenditure as a part of his personal expenses.

There is, however, a more usual method of giving refreshments, and that is to send them round to the committee rooms *as an accepted part of election routine*, or for them to be ordered at committee rooms for the workers *in no sense as a personal act*, but to supply them as demanded by *custom or by right*. Refreshments supplied in this way are undoubtedly "payment" to the extent of the value of refreshments. As such they constitute "employment," and the offence of "illegal employment" is probably committed. Of course, should refreshments be supplied purely to the paid staff and the cost of them added to the cost of their wages and returned in that manner, no offence of any kind is committed, but if refreshments are provided for other workers, then the offence of illegal employment is probably complete.

There is a recent change in the law in this regard which does not appear to have been noted by either of the textbooks. The R.P. Act of 1918 repealed the prohibition to vote, which formerly rested on persons employed for payment. This change affected the position somewhat. It will have been seen that a man who received his meals at the committee rooms was nevertheless "employed," either legally or illegally, according to whether or no his employment was returned under one of the scheduled heads, but though only

receiving meals and not receiving money, he was previously prohibited from voting, and if he voted his vote could have been struck off.

There is a third offence which might be committed and in our opinion is committed by the provision of refreshments. The act of payment for same is undoubtedly an "illegal payment," unless, of course, returned as wages. This definitely settles the question so far as we are concerned and puts out of court any such custom as we indicated above. The election agent who seeks to camouflage such an item of payment commits a further offence of falsification of return, and probably crowns this with a false declaration. The only safe course then is not to supply refreshments but to let every man or woman provide their own meals. There is nothing to prevent workers combining or clubbing together to buy meals providing election funds are not involved.

There is a leading case dealing with refreshments to workers, which, though not covering all the points involved, may be taken as clearly laying down the illegality of the supply of refreshments under circumstances which are very general. The case referred to is that of the Barrow-in-Furness Election Petition. At the election the Liberal Ward Committees met and discussed the question of giving refreshments to workers. It had always been a custom in Barrow to provide such refreshments. On this occasion (a few years after the passing of the 1883 Act) the workers, about four hundred strong, were called together by the election agent, and it was agreed, in the presence of the candidate, that refreshments should be given, and a refreshment committee was formed. On polling day 330 workers turned up and 441 meals were provided. The Court held that although hospitality was not an offence in the case of an election, you cannot employ persons beyond certain clerks and messengers for payment, and that what was done constituted an illegal payment and employment, and therefore an illegal practice, and unseated the respondent.

On the general question of the morality or expediency of giving refreshments, one has only to quote Mr. Justice Field in the same case, whose words are a model for electioneers to bear in mind. He said:—

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WHAT A WOMEN'S SECTION DID

A GRAND BAZAAR AND FLORAL FETE AT EAST HAM NORTH.

Five shillings, ten eager spirits, and enthusiasm, perhaps not untainted with doubt—that, we understand, was the beginning of the bazaar and floral fete organised by the Manor Park and Forest Gate Women's Sections of East Ham (North) Labour Party, and held in the Labour Hall, Katherine Road, East Ham, on Saturday, September 1st. Surely here is encouragement and example for the rest of the country and an utter discomfiture of those weaklings who are for ever wringing their hands and telling us their party has got no money.

The bazaar and floral fete under notice was a wonderful success, particularly considering that East Ham is an East-End borough which has been very hard hit by unemployment and high rates.

As some evidence of the magnificent work put in it should be stated that in the space of ten hours the stalls were set up, standards to same, drapings and decorations were fitted and completed, and all articles priced and arranged for sale. In fact, everything complete for the opening. To this should be added

that the streamer decorations were made *during these ten hours*, and the half-gross of balloons inflated—some job. The brilliant scheme of decoration of artificial flowers on standards from the top of which to the large central corona depended festoons of bright streamers and balloons, it would be difficult to surpass.

We should very much like to be able to reproduce in full the dainty souvenir programme and guide to the bazaar and fete. We must content ourselves by mentioning that the stalls included women's and children's ware, books new and second-hand, fancy work, novelties, dainty confections, Russian peasant-made toys, and specimens of craftsman's work. In the side-shows were to be found card and hand-reading, phrenology, candle lighting competitions, raffles, hat-trimming for men, and treasure hunt for everybody. There was music and Morris dancing by the Morris Dancers from Letchworth Garden City, and children's competitions in plasticine and pastel, and a fancy dress parade for the little ones showed that the circle of profitable enjoyment was complete.

Light refreshments were, of course, obtainable, while there was dancing and games for everybody. Mention should be given of the sweet pea stall, where you could join the Labour Party; the primrose stall, where was sold household goods and Co-op. tobacco and cigarettes; the violet stall, pounds of all sorts; the rose stall, fancy work, toys and "bazaar" hats, which carried free admission to the social and dance; the chrysanthemum stall, books; the daffodil stall, clothing; the rambler rose stall, confections and ices; the poppy stall, toys and handicraft; the marguerite stall, the dip tub. There was also a chamber of destiny, the mysteries of which we dare not here attempt to unravel. Altogether the East Ham (North) Labour Party and its friends catered for a merry time, and they got it. In addition to the women, we are sure that infinite credit was due to the agent, Mr. W. S. Rainbird, whose experience in these matters is not readily equalled.

We should add that the spirit of good fellowship generated at the bazaar will have a lasting effect long after the actual proceeds have gone the way of all such things, and the valuable education in the possibilities of team work

have made the women's section confident of their place in the party. These effects are better even than the financial gain which we understand will accrue from this effort. At the time of writing the ladies of the bazaar have not issued their balance sheet, but a bird whispers in our ear that the expenses may be less than the income by a matter of about £40. An excellent return for a one-day effort. We gather that in fifteen weeks £20 share-money was collected and some £40 in cash was taken at the bazaar.

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WHAT ARE CANDIDATES' PERSONAL EXPENSES?

After the last General Election a number of enquiries were received as to the precise interpretation of candidates' personal expenses. A good deal of confusion undoubtedly exists as to what are proper charges to be returned as personal expenses and what items should be paid by the agent and returned under other headings. The following extract, therefore, from "Practical Notes on the Management of Elections" will be read with interest. The work named was published by P. S. King and Sons some years ago at 1/6 and is probably now out of print. The remarks we quote, however, hold good for the present hour and have equal force as when they were first made.

"Apart from the election expenses, the election agent will require to know something of the 'personal expenses' of the candidate. These are defined by the Corrupt and Illegal Practices Prevention Act of 1883 (Section 64) as including 'the reasonable travelling expenses of his living at hotels or elsewhere for the purposes of, and in relation to, the election.' In practice, of course, these expenses will include not only the strictly personal expenses of the candidate, but also those which are necessitated by his hospitality extended, within legitimate limits, to persons who come down to help him as speakers or workers in the election. If the candidate is staying at a local hotel he may entertain his auxiliaries there and include the cost in his personal expenses. If he has his own residence in the constituency, he may do the same, whether the residence be temporary or permanent. This is social custom. But the candidate may not pay his friends' fares, since that is not customary among us. And this expenditure on entertainment must be strictly bona fide. The circumstances must be such that the hospitality is socially reasonable and is extended to persons who might have been entertained in the same way even if no election had been pending. If I am a candidate for a Birmingham constituency I may entertain at a local hotel (or in my house at Birmingham, if I have one) any friends of similar social status who come from London or Newcastle to speak at my meetings or assist at my propaganda. I may even

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have champagne on the table at dinner, since it may be assumed that my friends are accustomed to that form of refreshment, and the cost may rank among my personal expenses. But if my friends from Newcastle happen to be colliers and I entertain them with champagne at dinner, the transaction will probably be scrutinised much more closely, if it should come, as an item of my personal expenses, under notice of the election judges, since it will, in their eyes, begin to assume a peculiar and questionable aspect. It is not that the law objects to a collier having champagne. It is simply the judicial jealousy of anything that looks like an illicit influence. Much more severe will be the scrutiny if the visitors are local colliers, because then there will be a grave suspicion that the expression "personal expenses" is being made to hide something very like treating. Finally, if the colliers are voters in the constituency where I am standing, my so-called "personal expenses" will be overhauled if the matter goes before an election court, and I shall have but little chance of escaping the loss of the seat on a charge of treating.

If the candidate is living at an hotel, then his hotel bill, plus an allowance for travelling and incidentals, will form your total. If he took a house within three months of the fight, it would be better to include the whole of the expenses attaching to his tenacy. If it were taken earlier, three months' expenditure need only be included. If he is, and has been for a period long anterior to the election, a bona fide resident of the constituency, so that his household expenses would have been incurred whether there was a contest or not, you might put in a month's ordinary household expenses, plus an estimate of the additional amount spent in entertaining friends and helpers during the contest. The best way to proceed is to send a formal letter to your candidate, immediately after the election, asking him how much his personal expenses were, and reminding him that if they exceeded £100 they must be paid through the election agent. If they are under £100 you have no concern with the items. It will be sufficient for you to put the candidate's reply, stating the amount, among the vouchers which you file. I know of no case where the personal expenses have been challenged. None

the less, I recommend you to comply strictly with the Act lest your own return should yield the first decision on the subject."

WHEN A YANKEE GOES ELECTIONEERING

From Atlanta comes the following sworn statement of election expenses incurred by an unsuccessful Georgia candidate for the office of County Commissioner at the recent "primary" election:—

Lost 3,419 hours' sleep thinking about the campaign. Gave 1 beef, 4 shoats, and 5 sheep to a county barbecue. Gave away 2 pairs of suspenders, 4 calico dresses, 13 baby's rattles, and 5 dols. in cash. Kindled 14 kitchen fires, and put up 4 stoves. Attended 16 revival meetings, and was baptised 4 times by total immersion and 2 times in some other way. Made love to 9 grass widows, kissed 126 babies, hugged 49 old maids, got dog-bit 39 times, and gave 50 dols. to foreign missions. Walked 4,676 miles, and shook hands with 9,508 persons. Told 10,101 lies, and talked enough to make, in print, 1,000 volumes.

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